

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 EB-07

/072 W

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R 121756Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9415

INFO DEPT COMMERCE WASHDC

DEPT JUSTICE WASHDC

USPOSTAL SERVICE WASHDC

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

UNCLAS PORT AU PRINCE 576

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BDIS, PGOV, HA

SUBJECT: \$3 MILLION STAMP SCANDAL & CABINET RESHUFFLE: PROSECUTIONS
PROMISED

REF: PAUP 552, 551

1. LE MATIN PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION CONCERNING THE
STAMP SCANDAL INVESTIGATION IN ITS MARCH 11 EDITION:

2. THE GOH INVESTIGATION BEGAN OVER EIGHT DAYS AGO FOLLOWING A
PRIVATE MEETING BETWEEN COMMERCE UNDER SECRETARY HENRY BAYARD
AND PRESIDENT DUVALIER, IN WHICH BAYARD SAID HE HAD PROOF
OF AN ILLEGAL ISSUANCE OF HAITIAN POSTAL STAMPS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES
BASED ON HIS FORGED SIGNATURE APPEARING ON A LETTER SENT ABROAD.
WHILE THE INVESTIGATION TOOK PLACE, BAYARD STAYED AWAY FROM HIS
OFFICE UNTIL MARCH 8, WHEN IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT FRANCOIS MURAT
HAD REPLACED SERGE FOURCAND AS SECRETARY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(PAUP 551) AND JUSTICE SECRETARY JEANTY REVEALED THE STAMP
SCANDAL (PAUP 552).

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3. REGARDING THE CABINET RESUFFLE, LE MATIN BREEZILY AND

SARCASTICALLY COMMENTED, "WAS IT THE MINISTERIAL REFORM ANNOUNCED LONG AGO, BUT WITH PARTICULAR INSISTENCE SINCE THE INQUIREY BEGAN AT THE DEPT. OF JUSTICE? HOWEVER, AFTER ITS READING, THE PUBLIC ASCERTAINED THAT IT WAS MORE A REPLASTERING JOB THAN THE REFORM UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR SEVERAL MONTHS... THAT IT WAS SIMPLY A QUESTION OF REPLACING OUR GOOD FRIEND DR. SERGE FOURCAND AS MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY BY FRANCOIS MURAT, BANKING SPECIALIST AND FORMER COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR AT THE NATIONAL BANK, A CITIZEN UNANIMOUSLY HAILED FOR HIS PROBITY AND BUSINESS SENSE".

4. LE MATIN CLAIMED THAT JEANTY'S ANNOUNCEMENT AT PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTION WAS WIDELY APPROVED, NOTING DUVALIER'S DESIRE TO BRING THE SCANDAL COMPLETELY INTO THE OPEN AND TO INFLICT THE PUNISHMENT MERITED FOR THOSE COMMITTING A CRIMINAL ACT PREJUDICIAL TO HAITI'S PRESIGE AND ABOVE ALL TO ITS CREDIT AT THE UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION.

5. LE MATIN SAID DUVALIER INTENDS TO IMPOSE MORAL INTEGRITY ON ALL GOH ELEMENTS. IT ADDED IT WAS TIME FOR HAITIAN JUSTICE TO BE APPLIED EQUALLY, AND THAT NORMS HONORED EVERYWHERE AS INDISPENSABLE TO UPRIGHT AND IRREPROACHABLE ADMINISTRATION MUST BE RESPECTED AND FOLLOWED IN HAITI.

6. SAYING IT HAD NO INTENTION TO ABUSE PERSONAL REPUTATIONS, LE MATIN REFUSED TO PRINT THE NAMES BELIEVED BEING INVESTIGATED UNLESS THEY ARE ACTUALLY CHARGED WITH AN OFFENSE. NEVERTHELESS IT SAID EIGHT PERSONS WHOSE NAMES IT DID NOT KNOW WERE ARRESTED MARCH 10, POSSIBLY INCLUDING A FORMER UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE UNDER FRANCOIS DUVALIER, A HIGH GOH OFFICIAL, AND EVEN AN IMPORTANT BUSINESSMAN. LE MATIN SAID ITS GOH SOURCE COULD NOT REVEAL THE NAMES OF THE ARRESTED PERSONS WHILE THE INVESTIGATION WAS STILL GOING ON.

7. LE MATIN REVEALED THAT THE WRONG-DOERS HAD ARRANGED WITH A PRINTING COMPANY TO PRODUCE A COUNTERFEIT EDITION OF LE MONITEUR, THE GOH'S OFFICIAL REGISTER, CARRYING THE DATE OF FEB. 18, 1974 AND USING SECRETARIES FOURCAND'S AND BROS' NAMES. IT QUOTED A GOH MINISTER AS INSISTING THAT THE COUNTERFEIT WAS NOT DONE AT THE NATIONAL PRESS, WHERE THE GENUINE LE MONITEUR IS PRINTED. NEEDING THE SIGNATURE OF A HIGH COMMERCE OFFICIAL FOR THEIR UNCLASSIFIED

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LETTER TO THE STAMP COMPANY, IT SAID THE WRONG-DOERS CRUELY FORGED UNDER SECRETARY BAYARD'S SIGNATURE.

8. LE MATIN ESTIMATED THE ILLICIT STAMPS WERE VALUED ON THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET AT POSSIBLE \$3 MILLION, AND SOME INVESTIGATORS INSISTED IT COULD BE MORE. IT SAID THE PENALTY FACING ANYONE CONVICTED IN THE SCANDAL WAS FORCED LABOR IN PERPETUITY. IT CALLED FOR PROSECUTION TO THE LIMIT, EXPRESSED FAITH IN JUSTICE

SECRETARY JEANTY, BUT ADDED THAT IT WOULD BE AMONG THE FIRST
TO PROTEST IF EVER THE COURSE OF JUSTICE IN THE MATTER APPEARED
TO FALTER.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CABINET, PERSONNEL CONDUCT, PRESS COMMENTS, FRAUDS, REMOVAL FROM OFFICE, COUNTERFEITING, POSTAGE STAMPS, INVESTIGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975PORTA00576
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750087-0393
From: PORT AU PRINCE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750358/aaaacaci.tel
Line Count: 119
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 PAUP 552, 75 551
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: woolflhd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 SEP 2003 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <30 DEC 2003 by woolflhd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: \$3 MILLION STAMP SCANDAL & CABINET RESHUFFLE: PROSECUTIONS PROMISED
TAGS: BDIS, PGOV, HA, (FOURCAND, SERGE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006